

March 11, 2009

Subject: DO NOT PASS HB 228

Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

I am a faculty member at Montana State University and a resident of Bozeman.

I am writing to you today to express my concerns regarding a bill you will be hearing on March 17th, HB228 entitled "Citizen Self-defense and Firearm Rights". As someone living in a Montana community I am greatly concerned with the implications of this bill. I am most concerned with the language that removes the necessity for a concealed weapons permit. It would even allow violent and convicted felons to conceal weapons without a permit. This change to law makes me uncomfortable as a citizen and would not in any way make me feel safer, as proponents of the bill are arguing.

One of the other things that concerns me most is the brandishing language that this bill adds to Montana Code. In this language anyone who feels threatened may now pull out, wave and even fire a gun. I think that legalizing this type of action is very dangerous, especially if the people brandishing and potentially firing these weapons are people without concealed weapons permits.

The argument for this legislation is that it will provide protection and safety for people in Montana; I do not believe that this legislation does either. I support safe gun ownership, but I believe that this bill moves in the exact opposite direction of responsible gun possession. I oppose this bill as a student, and as a member of the Montana community, and I strongly urge a DO NOT PASS on HB228.

Thank you for your time.

Best

Dede Taylor
dtaylor@montana.edu